

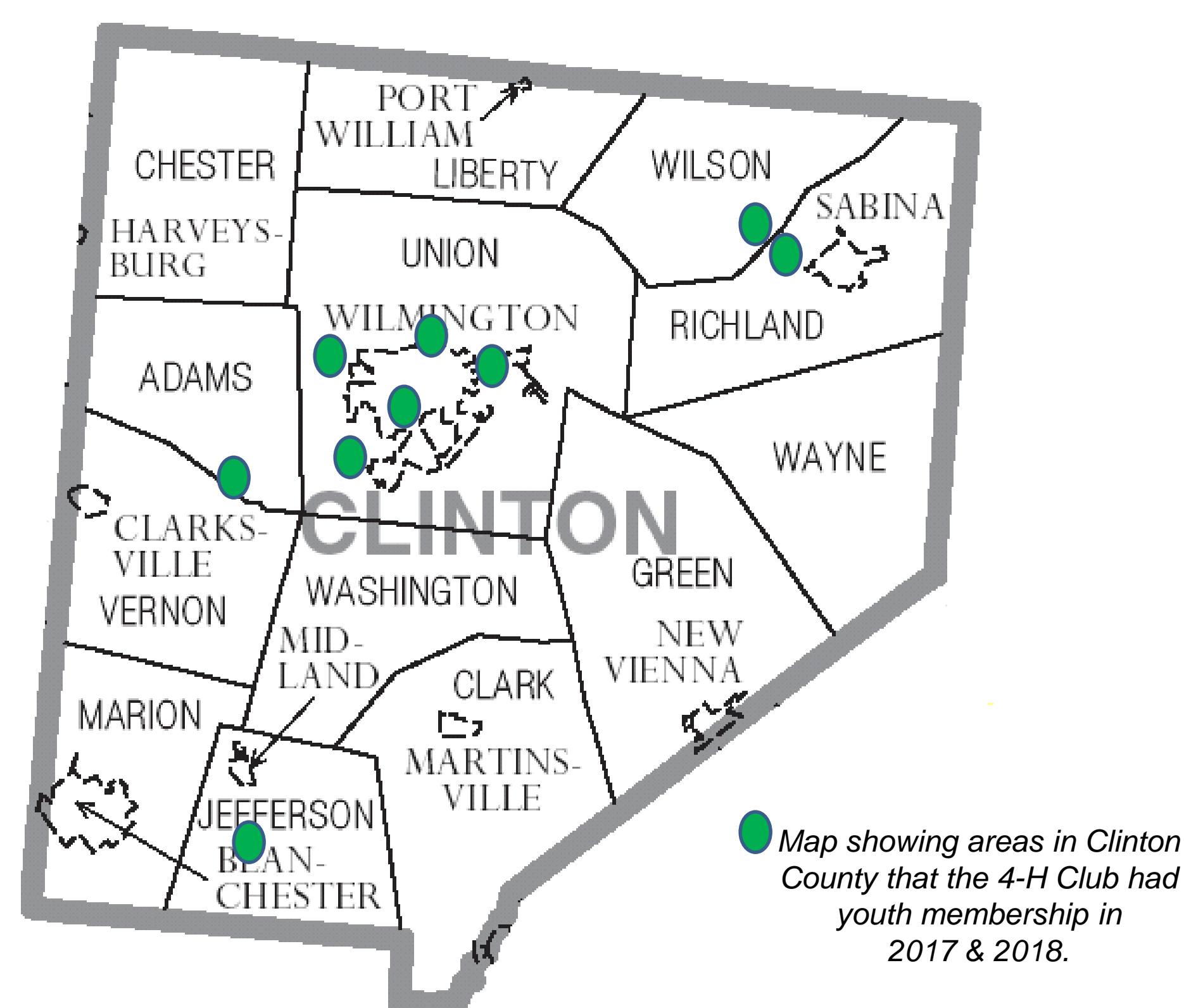
# Into the Barn and Out of Trouble, Connecting Juvenile Court Youth to the 4-H Program Through a 4-H Club Experience

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## OBJECTIVES

1. Develop community partnerships to serve youth at risk in the county.
2. Bring youth from the Juvenile Court Probation System to 4-H to begin the foundation for life skills development.
3. Provide a program in a safe environment to engage youth ages 12-18 that have mandatory service hours in the community.
4. Engage youth in hands-on involvement and experimental learning through 4-H projects with adult volunteers.
5. Design a 4-H club to help youth increase self-confidence and make a positive impact in the community.



## OVERVIEW

County youth in the mandated Juvenile Court Community Service Program needed a program to engage them in the community. The teens that participate in the club have limited access to activities outside the home, lack of support and limited financial resources. A partnership with the Ohio State University Extension and the Clinton County Juvenile Court established a program for youth to begin learning how to be an active participant in the community while participating in a pro-social activity. As a result, a community club was established called Bacon & Bits 4-H Club. Participants receive hands-on involvement and experimental learning in a 4-H club setting. The members had to spend at least five hours with the projects each week working with adult volunteers plus biweekly meetings and events.

## DISCUSSION

After concluding the 2017 4-H season with the Bacon & Bits 4-H Club, the Juvenile Court staff and 4-H Educator implemented changes for 2018. Due to high member needs and livestock care needs, the club added one more adult volunteer and planned to house animal projects closer to the members' residence. The team also wanted to expand the size of the club from three to five members. The changes provided more opportunities for the members to engage in learning opportunities, better animal care, more flexibility for meeting locations and increased time with adult volunteers. When the club was established the focus was swine projects only. Changes were implemented for 2018 to expand the project base to include art, rabbits and goats. More time was implemented for meaningful interaction for the members with a positive peer group and adult volunteers.

## CONCLUSIONS

- As a result of the program success more youth at risk have been able to participate in the program. The members have become more involved in the community and have shown more interest in school.
- Additional sponsors and partners have assisted with program costs and needs.
- The program has provided opportunity for more youth involvement while engaging more community adult volunteers.
- Club members engaged in hands on learning with caring adults to help build skills and self confidence in a safe environment throughout the 4-H season.
- From the experience members had the opportunity to join a 4-H club, attend 4-H Camp & Natural Resources Camp, and participate in county clinics, the Swine Start Up Program, and Clinton County Pre-Fair & Fair events.

## RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- 77% of the teens engaged in the club were able to participate in the junior fair.
- 50% of the teens from 2018 want to continue in the club.
- 7 organizations partnered to provide resources for the club to purchase clothing, books, feed, show supplies, livestock, and transportation.
- Club increased in membership by 50% from 2017 to 2018.
- 1 youth member joined a school club.
- 1 youth member made a connection through 4-H and received a job.
- 23 area businesses and individuals supported the teens that sold a market livestock project in the Junior Fair Sale in 2018.

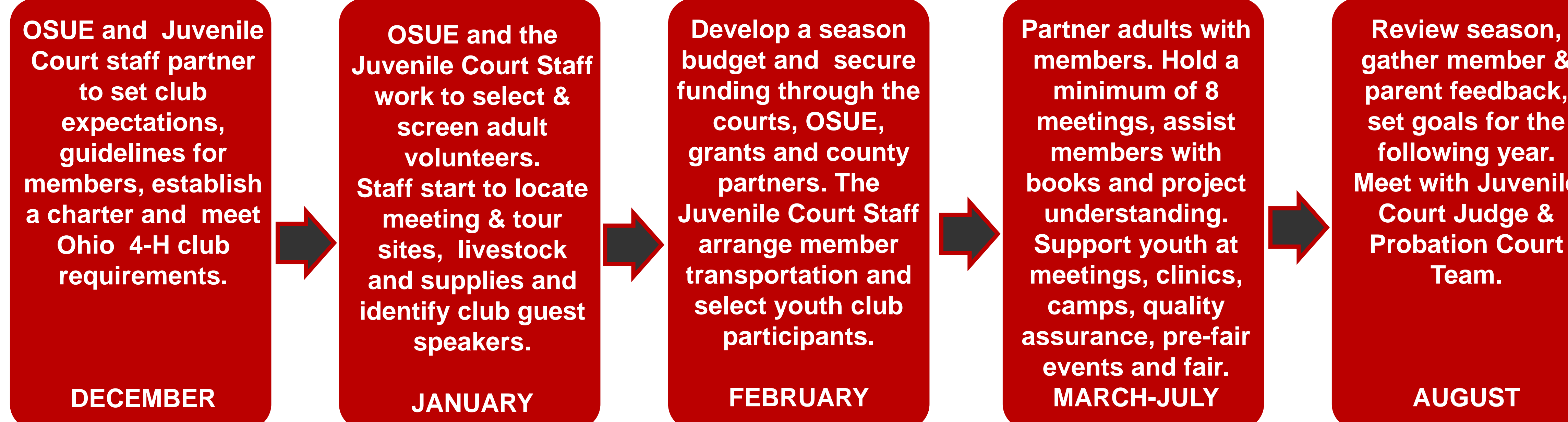
## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

1. Ohio State University Extension, Clinton County
2. Buckley Brothers Inc.
3. Clinton County Farm Bureau
4. Laurel Oaks Career Campuses
5. Clinton County Swine Committee
6. Clinton County Pork Producers
7. Clinton County Friends of the Court

## TESTIMONIALS

"I met a lot of great new friends. I had a lot of fun and would love to do it again."  
 "4-H taught me responsibility and life lessons. And I also met a lot of good people."  
 "I met new people and learned how to take care of a hog."

## PROCESS & STEPS TO START A JUVENILE COURT 4-H CLUB



## REFERENCES

- Fox, J., Schroeder, D. & Lodl, K. (2003). Life skill development through 4-H clubs: The perspective of 4-H alumni. *Journal of Extension* [On-line], 41(6).
- Pennington, P., & Edwards, M. C. (2006). Former 4-H key club members' perceptions of the impact of "giving" life skills preparation on their civic engagement. *Journal of Extension* [On-line], 44 (1) Article 1FEA7.
- Severs, B. S., & Dormody, T. J. (1995). Leadership life skills development: perceptions of senior 4-H youth. *Journal of Extension* [On-line], 33 (4) Article 4RIB1.

